

and humane beings under the systematic training of the ward nurses not to believe that it would not hurt the nurses and would immensely benefit the students to have them in the same hospital.]

Dr. Hamilton then discusses the financial question, and shows how the present clumsy method of paying salaries to a number of ineffective people could be changed to the school system. She also advocates separate buildings for nurses' homes. No such thing now exists in France, and the squalor and unpleasant surroundings of nurses' quarters in French hospitals form a serious impediment to the entrance of refined women. She concludes by recommending to the observation of the members of the Congress the Protestant hospital at Bordeaux, where, under her direction, has been established the only school in France where a thorough two-years' course is taken under the management of a trained head, where a uniform is worn, where only pupils of good education are accepted, where the pupils pay for their training, and where a certificate is given after theoretical and practical examination.

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### LETTERS

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IN my visitations to Continental hospitals I have seen some of the most beautiful and also the cleanest hospital kitchens imaginable, and have been surprised to find in how many of them all—or nearly all—of the work is done by women. One sometimes feels here that the kitchen stands on a higher plane than it does with us. We seem to be a little ashamed of kitchens, and often give them a mean corner and ugly appliances. Our home kitchens are usually hideous, and over here they are apt to be among the prettiest rooms of the house. To be sure, in these hospitals nothing like our charming little diet- or teaching-kitchens is even imagined, nor, except in some private hospitals, is the dainty tray to be found such as we have it under the beautifying influence of our domestic science teachers in training-schools. But some of the big hospital kitchens are beautiful to behold.

There seems to be a modern prejudice against brass and copper utensils, and no doubt iron-agate ware is more hygienic and easily cleansed. It is certainly also very pretty in the blue and white; but there is a kind of stunning gorgeousness about a huge hospital kitchen completely fitted out with brass and copper of the most solid and massive handwork and shapes of antique and classic beauty, all polished until they reflect the light. A special one of these pictures of mediæval kitchen beauty and cheer was in Bruges, at the hospital of St. John. Deep covetousness filled my soul at sight of the copper bowls and brass pitchers hanging on the wall and standing about all ready to be stolen. The nun in charge, moving about in the dim spaces (for that kitchen was rather dark) in her robes and bat-like cap, made a most charming picture of a kitchen of the olden time. Then I shall not forget the kitchen in the big city, or rather canton, hospital at Berne. This was quite modern in its fittings and of a spotless cleanliness. One could not only have eaten off of the floor, but have quite enjoyed doing so. In the midst was a slender and even delicate-looking young deaconess in her dress of dark blue with small white spots and cap, who was the presiding genius of the kitchen. Every morning at six o'clock she was in the kitchen, her staff of women being there at four. She had a couple of men to do heavy work, but all the cooking was done by women under her supervision. The

arrangement of everything was most orderly and dainty, and the kitchen was bright, as it was on the ground floor of a pavilion which stood in the exact centre of the whole architectural plan, the wards being along three sides of a great square, the administration in front and the kitchen in the middle of the open space. Its architectural outline, with a big clock-tower, was so attractive that it was ornamental rather than otherwise.

Another beautiful kitchen was in Munich in the General Hospital. The hospital has eight hundred beds, and the kitchen was spacious, with a number of smaller sub-kitchens opening from it in three directions. It was completely furnished with a most lavish and beautiful array of brass and copper very picturesquely arranged, some hanging in rows and some standing on shelves, the huge caldrons all in their places on the great fireplace. One small room was completely filled with brass jugs and other utensils waiting to be scoured and polished. The hospital is in charge of Catholic sisters, and there were five or six of them in the kitchen and its precincts, all at work cooking different things. In one small wing apple tarts were being made; in another the vegetables were being cut up. This kitchen also was as clean as wax, and had a hospitable and home-like atmosphere that was very noticeable. It seemed like a place that was lived in. The sisters were cheerful, friendly souls, not in the least austere, and seemed much pleased at our interest and admiration. (Mrs. Robb was with me.) The head sister told us she had no men—only women—help, and that these prepared vegetables and cleaned up, but that the sisters did the entire cooking with the exception of the bread, which was bought. Their diet-lists too were very detailed and systematically kept, with duplicates in the bread-room, where sat the sister who attended to the bread-cutting machine, which slices bread into any desired width. (Have we these machines at home? I am ashamed to say I do not remember positively, but seem to have a recollection of ward maids or junior nurses slicing the bread by hand.) I saw the bread-cutting machine first in the Wilhelmina Hospital in Amsterdam, and in Holland kitchens and kitchen appliances are elevated to a fine art, both in convenience and attractiveness. Now perhaps the sisters are not always good nurses, for they do not receive the training, but these German sisters are certainly notable house-keepers, and a prettier sight than this great kitchen, the sisters in big aprons, white fichus, and heavily pleated white linen caps, would be hard to find.

But perhaps the most sumptuous and amazing kitchen of all, so far seen, was the one in Venice in the Civil Hospital. This was bigger even and more opulent-looking, and its brasses more bewildering, more enormous, and more varied than any, for it had to provide for thirteen hundred patients. This too was beautifully clean—indeed, the whole hospital was the cleanest place we had seen so far in Italy. Here Sisters of Charity were in charge, wearing close black hoods and white aprons, and giving the same air of sweetness and charm. Four men assistants were allowed in this kitchen to do heavy work.

Now one delightful kitchen was not in a hospital, but I must just put it in, for it was in a *Hospiz*—the hospiz on the top of the Simplon Pass coming by post-wagon from Switzerland to Italy. The monks here entertain all travellers, as they do on the Saint Bernard, and their kitchen was big enough to stow away a hundred people, with a huge fireplace in the middle with its copper caldrons full of hot beef-tea. The post wagons always stop here, and the whole train filed in to be refreshed. As the pass was covered with snow, the hot bouillon was most acceptable. The monk in his brown robes was a fatherly

soul, but loveliest of all, behind the fireplace in a choice spot, were seven young St. Bernard dogs, with their whole outfit of bones and warm mush-pot. Not all kitchens can boast of such an attraction.

And one more word: anyone who is interested in kitchens should not fail to visit the mediæval kitchen (now fully restored) in the "Gruut Huis" of the old Counts of Flanders, in Bruges, which shows all the curious cooking implements of wrought iron used in the fifteenth century, and another interesting one is that in Heidelberg Castle, with its open fireplace at which a whole ox could be roasted.

L. L. D.

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## ITEMS

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### HYPODERMIC MEDICATION IN STERILIZED PHIALS

It may be that our hospitals at home have begun to use the sterilized phial medicaments for hypodermic injections, but if not, I should like to describe this method, which was new to me, and which seems to have many advantages over the tablets and other preparations for giving drugs hypodermically from the standpoint of surgical technique and asepsis. Details of technique must always interest the nurse, who is held responsible for many results. The Italian physicians in their practice and in hospital work use these phials entirely, and it was in Italy that I saw them.

The phials are very delicate little glass things, each holding just one dose of a given drug in solution, the strength being, of course, always designated. They have a long, delicate neck just a little larger than the hypodermic needle. They are filled in the manufactory under aseptic precautions, and then the opening of the tiny flask is hermetically sealed. When a hypodermic injection is to be given this seal is broken off, and the needle, which has been sterilized and placed in position on the syringe, is inserted directly into the long neck, the phial being held in an inclined position. The piston is then drawn and the syringe filled. It will be readily seen that perfect asepsis is obtained in this way.

The phials and contents are prepared by an Italian firm in Florence, and besides the usual drugs Italian physicians always order various drugs in this way which we are not usually accustomed to give hypodermically, such as preparations of iron, guaiacol, hypophosphites, etc. I went into Parke, Davis & Co.'s drug shop in Florence and asked them if they sent many of these phials to America. They said that they did send a good many to private physicians, but not to hospitals. It is possible they may be quite expensive, but even then I recommend them to the notice of our hospital superintendents.

L. L. D.

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MISS MCGAHEY's friends in America will be sorry to hear that ill-health has prompted her to give up the hospital position which she has held with such conspicuous ability for twelve years in Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. We sincerely hope that a period of rest will completely restore her health, and would be glad to have her come to America via Berlin in the coming summer.

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AN English nurse, Miss Edla Wortabet, formerly at the head of St. George's Hospital, Beyrout, has written a book on nursing for the Syrians, which has been published by an Arabic journal and publishing company. Miss Wortabet has written a number of articles on hospitals of the Mediterranean which have ap-